



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE JAPANESE COMMERCIAL COMMISSION

BY BARON EIICHI SHIBUSAWA,

Chairman Commission representing Chambers of Commerce of Japan,
President Dai-Ichi Bank, Tokyo.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: You have done me a great honor by inviting me to address a distinguished and intelligent audience like this. A relic of an old and defunct system of education, I hardly feel myself qualified to address a learned audience such as I am now facing. I, therefore, feel the honor all the more.

I wish, in the first place, to say a word about the origin of the present visit of the Japanese Commercial Commission. With a view to a better and closer understanding of each other, and to the promotion of neighborly relations between the two nations, the Chambers of Commerce of Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Yokohama and Kobe last year invited your Pacific Coast chambers of commerce to send over a commission to Japan. The invitation was accepted, and a representative body of business men from the Pacific Coast paid us a visit about the same time that your fleet visited us, also at our invitation. Pleased with the welcome their representatives met with in Japan, the chambers of commerce in the Pacific Coast States invited us this year, and the result is that we are now touring through this country as their guests.

Japan, as you know, was first introduced to the Western world by Commodore Perry, a little over half a century ago. Until that time Japan had followed a policy of seclusion which had been forced upon her by a train of events which it would be impossible for me to narrate within the time at my disposal. I shall content myself with saying that that policy of seclusion was quite foreign to the spirit of the Japanese people and that its adoption was against their will.

It was fortunate for Japan and America that our introduction to the ways of the Occidental world was performed by men of liberal sympathy and breadth of view, like Commodore Perry and Townsend Harris. Were it not for the patient and considerate

manner in which the delicate task was undertaken by those distinguished men, it might not have been possible to effect the opening of Japan without bloodshed. It is, therefore, only natural that the memory of these men is cherished with a feeling of deep gratitude by all intelligent Japanese.

Inaugurated under these auspicious circumstances, the friendly relations between the United States and Japan have since been steadily strengthened, until to-day those relations are beyond the power of mischief-makers seriously to disturb. The unfailing friendliness of America toward us may almost be said to be an article of faith with our people. How greatly they value your friendship and how strongly they desire to retain it, you can easily imagine when I tell you that our present trip excited an unprecedentedly lively interest among all classes of the Japanese people, from His Majesty the Emperor down to the man in the street.

His Imperial Majesty was so pleased with our trip that on the eve of our departure he gave us a banquet at one of his detached palaces in Tokyo, when he honored us with a most gracious message through the minister of his household.

Since our arrival at Seattle on the first of September we have been amongst your people for nearly two months, everywhere receiving the most gratifying evidences of courtesy and friendliness. Such has, indeed, been the uniform kindness of the people we have met that I am at times inclined to believe that the whole nation has turned into a reception committee. We are sincerely glad to know that our friendly sentiments are fully reciprocated by the people of this great republic.

It is quite natural that two nations, bound together by such strong ties of friendship as unite Japan and America, should have an extensive and growing trade between them. To increase that trade as much as possible is the desire of the Japanese people, and it is with this in view that we are utilizing this trip for the inspection of your industrial plants and the study of your financial and business methods.

It is sometimes remarked by superficial observers with an air of reproach that the Japanese buy less from America than they sell to her. It is true, but they fail to notice that this is largely the result of the indifference of the American business man to the cultivation of foreign markets. In any case, I can safely assure

you that the object constantly kept in our minds in prosecuting our investigations is to find out what produce or manufactures we may profitably buy from you, as well as to find out what we can sell to you.

We come to you on a mission of peace and commerce, and, unlike our important political embassies which visited the United States in 1860 and 1871, we are not charged with any official message. We come from our people accredited to the people of America, and, as such, we are everywhere accorded the most cordial welcome. From the warmth of the welcome we meet with we are encouraged to hope that our mission will be crowned with complete success.